



## SNOW PATROL

As the season draws to a close, what's in store next week for skiers in Europe and North America?

**T**HIS has been a funny old winter in the Alps and the Pyrenees with lots of timely snowfalls, but not that many major dumps.

As a result, pistes almost everywhere are in excellent shape for March, with a deep base at altitude.

The best could be yet to come. Late March and April have often offered outstanding skiing before the final thaw.

The unusually bitterly cold temperatures of recent weeks have given way to warmer weather and spring has arrived in the Alps.

Meanwhile, North America is offering some great skiing, though fresh snow would make things perfect.

### FRANCE

THE bitter temperatures of recent weeks — as low as minus 30c — should disappear this weekend with the arrival of balmy sunshine.

Conditions are at their best in Val d'Isere and Tignes, where perfect groomed runs are complemented by 'go anywhere' spring snow conditions off-piste — as long as you take a guide because the slab avalanche risk remains



Picture: GETTY

significant. The freezing level is around 2,300m and snow on the lower slopes will become much heavier in the days to come.

Meribel (85cm/130cm) and the whole of the Three Valleys offer great skiing this weekend and for the week ahead.

### ITALY

MORE snow is needed, but there is some great skiing to be had in the Dolomites, the Milky Way and in the Aosta Valley.

In Val Gardena (70cm/160cm), blue skies and wonderful pistes have combined to provide exceptional ski conditions.

Lots of resorts should receive snow this weekend, but spring temperatures mean that at resort level it will be patchy and slushy.

Cervinia is skiing particularly well, with settled snow depths of 70cm to 180cm.

### AUSTRIA

IT'S been a great week, with 40cm falling across much of the country to produce some tremendous skiing high up. But lower slopes are already slushy.

If you're headed for the Arlberg, you are in for a real treat — St Anton (70cm/

255cm) and neighbouring Lech/Zurs (155cm/185cm) are nothing short of sensational.

### SWITZERLAND

DAVOS and Klosters (30cm/160cm) were also caught up in the storm that hit Austria. Along with Laax and adjoining Flims, they have some of best skiing in the country.

Conditions in other resorts vary from good to excellent on-piste, but once away from the groomed areas, the mountain sides are looking pretty threadbare.

### ANDORRA

THERE'S been no new snow in the past week and the onset of spring is well under way.

That said, the resorts have 120cm/165cm, which is more than enough snow to provide reasonable conditions during the final weeks of the season.

### U.S.

HEAVENLY, in California, is delightful, but skiers arriving this weekend for the American Spring Break want powder, but are not going to get it.

Mammoth clocked 30cm last week and Utah has a solid 3m base.

Colorado has had a 10cm dusting and should benefit from a colder weather expected this weekend.

### CANADA

WHISTLER, returning slowly to normal after the Winter Olympics, has had a metre of new snow over the past ten days and is in great shape, but the East Coast has extremely slushy conditions.

■ **INFORMATION** from [www.welove2ski.com](http://www.welove2ski.com)

